

PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT

Coastal Wetlands Review Work Assignment (WA) 1-04

Work Assignment Manager (WAM):

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Introduction

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Wetlands Division and Oceans and Coastal Protection Division formed a Coastal Wetlands Team with the goals of 1) better understanding stressors leading to coastal wetland loss; 2) identifying and disseminating tools, strategies, policies and information to protect and restore coastal wetland resources; and 3) raising awareness of the functions and values of, threats to, and opportunities to protect and restore coastal wetlands. Consistent with other federal agencies, EPA is defining coastal wetlands as tidal and freshwater wetlands within, HUC-8 (Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) - 8-digit or watershed classification code) watersheds that are either below the head of tide and draining to the Atlantic, Pacific or Gulf of Mexico; or drain directly to the Great Lakes.

Two recent reports have prompted EPA to form a Coastal Wetlands Team (CWT). The first report by the Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) recommends a national wetlands and climate change initiative to reduce impacts to wetlands, help wetlands to adapt and respond to climate change and provide leadership among programs.¹ ASWM calls for the initiative to include facilitation among climate, watershed and coastal zone programs; a survey of wetlands and climate policies, programs and other efforts; a comprehensive wetlands and climate change website; and identification and dissemination of best management practices to protect and help wetlands adapt to impacts of climate change. The second report by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USWFS) finds that from 1998 to 2004, wetlands in coastal watersheds in the Great Lakes, Atlantic and Gulf coasts have experienced an average net decrease of 59,000 acres per year.²

The CWT will undertake an effort to see what array of actions might reduce or reverse the trends in coastal wetland loss.³ To do so, EPA will review regulatory and voluntary efforts

¹ Association of State Wetland Managers (unpublished), Recommendations for a National Wetlands and Climate Change Initiative, January 12, 2009 draft.

² Stedman and Dahl (2008), Status and Trends of Wetlands in the Coastal Watersheds of the Eastern United States: 1998-2004.

³ The EPA Team defines *coastal wetland loss* as "a decline in the areal extent or ecological integrity (function and condition) of wetlands in coastal watersheds."

by federal, regional, state and local partners and assessing whether successful strategies to protect and restore coastal wetlands can be replicated in separate watersheds. Findings will then be used to inform decisions and program policies to reduce or reverse coastal wetland loss nationally.

Purpose

The EPA Team will address the following in this Coastal Wetland Review (CWR) effort:

1. What do existing assessments and managers on the ground indicate are factors responsible for coastal wetland losses?
2. What are examples of effective protection and restoration strategies and tools, and can they be transferred successfully to other watersheds?
3. What information gaps limit understanding of coastal wetland loss or management decisions to address loss?
4. How can EPA increase public understanding of the value of and threats to coastal wetlands, support strategies and tools, rules and policies to reduce or reverse loss, and help fill information gaps?

Geographic Scope

Coastal watersheds are defined as HUC-8 watersheds that drain to the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Great Lakes, or Pacific Ocean. The CWT will focus on wetlands that are located in these coastal watershed regions of the conterminous U.S.: North Atlantic, from Maine to New York; Mid-Atlantic, from New Jersey to Virginia; South Atlantic, from North Carolina to the Atlantic coast of Florida; the Gulf of Mexico; California; and the Pacific Northwest, including Oregon and Washington.

EPA Coastal Wetlands Team Tasks

The EPA Team's efforts fit within four main components:

1. Regional Reviews
2. Workshop(s)
3. Pilots of Successful Strategies and Tools
4. Outreach

Coastal Wetlands Team (CWT) Project - Background

1. Coastal Wetland Regional Reviews

The CWT will conduct regional reviews of existing information on threats to coastal wetland extent and condition, strategies and tools to reduce or reverse losses, and information gaps that limit managers' ability to understand or implement strategies to address loss. Each review will contain "snapshot" analyses of one to three coastal watersheds representative of the region.

Given the objectives of the regional reviews, the CWT will select focal watersheds for analyses based on the following: 1) recommendations from the InterAgency Coastal Wetlands Workgroup, 2) available wetland condition assessments, 3) variety of efforts to protect and restore coastal wetlands, and 4) willingness of stakeholders to collaborate with the CWT.

The CWT will schedule the on-site discussions with key stakeholders in focal watersheds to 1) better understand coastal wetland condition and trends; 2) gain additional insights into stressors currently affecting or expected to threaten coastal wetlands; 3) identify existing tools, actions, strategies and policies to reduce or reverse wetland losses and adapt to changing conditions; and 4) identify data or analysis gaps that limit managers' ability to understand or address coastal wetland losses. The term 'stakeholders' indicate all CWR participants and other individuals identified by the EPA Work Assignment Manager (WAM).

2. National Workshop

The EPA Team will conduct a national workshop to disseminate the findings of the regional coastal wetland reviews. Participants at this workshop will also participate in initial planning for "pilots" to assess how readily tools and strategies to combat coastal wetland losses can be implemented. Planning activities could include: discussion of preliminary selection criteria for strategies; tools and watersheds and; draft frameworks for evaluating the success of implementation efforts. During the national workshop, there will also be discussions to examine the data gaps and to identify approaches/tools/techniques that will more effectively address loss.

3. Pilots of Successful Strategies and Tools

EPA will assess whether efforts identified during the regional reviews and the national workshop are transferable to other coastal wetland watersheds by piloting strategies and tools in approximately six to eight coastal watersheds and evaluating their impact on wetland resources. The EPA team will work with partners such as EPA Regions, National Estuary Programs (NEPs), state agencies, coastal management programs and EPA's Office of Research and Development to develop a framework for assessing the effectiveness of these strategies, tools, rules and voluntary actions. The EPA Team will likely select smaller, well-monitored watersheds for the pilots in order to more easily detect the impacts of various management strategies.

4. Outreach

The EPA Team will conduct outreach to disseminate findings from the regional reviews, national workshops, and pilots. Notably, it will produce summaries of each Regional Review, National Workshop and Pilots, and make these reports available to the public. Building on these findings, the Team will work with its Interagency Workgroup partners to develop or improve strategies for federal agencies to reduce or reverse coastal wetland losses, such as changes to permitting or grant programs. Finally, the Team will augment an existing EPA website to create a coastal wetlands clearinghouse featuring the Team's findings, highlighting best practices and providing links and resources for federal, state and local wetlands managers.

Period of Performance

March 1, 2010 – February 28, 2011

Tasks and Deliverables:

Task 1. 0 - Work Plan and Budget

The contractor shall prepare a detailed work plan and budget for the accomplishment of the indicated tasks within 21 calendar days of receipt of the work assignment. The work plan shall include a description of: (a) proposed staff; (b) resources necessary for each task, (c) the number of hours and labor classifications proposed for each task, to include both prime contractor and subcontractor (if any) labor; and (d) a list of deliverables, with due dates and schedule for deliverables. Before the Work plan is started, the EPA WAM via written technical direction (TD), will tell the contractor the schedule and number of Coastal Wetlands Reviews (CWRs) with this work assignment.

Task 2. Assistance with Regional Coastal Wetland Reviews (CWRs)

The contractor shall provide support services for the following:

(Task 2.1) Pre-Coastal Wetland Reviews (CWR) preparation;

(Task 2.2) Coastal Wetland Reviews (CWR) on-site discussions and;

(Task 2.3) Post-Coastal Wetland Reviews (CWR) support.

Task 2.1- Pre-Coastal Wetland Reviews (CWR) Preparation - The contractor shall provide the following pre-CWR support:

- Provide a GIS map and data layers for CWR focal HUC.
- Produce a brief summary of relevant wetland regulations and policies regarding CWR focal HUC.
- Conduct a search of readily available literature regarding wetland loss, stressors, tools and strategies, and key information gaps for CWR HUC.
- Collect and summarize findings of stakeholder/participant supplied reports.
- Prepare PowerPoint slides with graphics and information from bullets above in task 2.1.
- Set-up Webinar to present PowerPoint slides from task 2.1 and send out webinar logistics information to invitees.
- Develop and manage list(s) of Coastal Wetland Reviews (CWRs) participants by affiliation and organize and update their registration and contact information.
- Distribute Coastal Wetland Reviews (CWR) Packets (packets supplied by WAM) to invitees as identified by the Work Assignment Manager prior to an on-site visit.
- Contact and communicate with identified stakeholders to schedule on-site meetings and communicate logistics (e.g. map, directions, agenda).

- Provide logistical support for the CWR on-site meetings and coordinate with the “host entity” which may be a National Estuary Program, a Federal Agency, or a meeting facility. In certain cases, the host may provide meeting space or equipment at no cost.

Therefore depending on the host and meeting site, the following services may be requested:

- (a) Reserve or book a facility to hold the on-site meetings;
- (b) Provide liaison services and communication between EPA and the facility and;
- (c) Identify and reserve all necessary meeting-relating equipment such as flip charts, computers, and/or projectors for presentations

If a meeting facility must be reserved, the EPA WAM will provide written TD to the contractor to book the space and reserve equipment.

Task 2.2 - CWR On-Site Support - The contractor shall provide on-site meetings and administrative support:

- Ensure meeting-relating equipment and logistical support services are available for on-site CWRs (e.g. computer, projector, flip charts, microphone).
- Collect new data and reports provided by participants from on-site CWRs meetings.
- Take notes of key and salient points during on-site CWRs.
- Record, organize and provide a list of stakeholders’ responses to EPA questions presented at CWR. Identify each comment by speaker affiliation.
- Present PowerPoint Slides with key summary information from bullets above in task 2.1 and task 2.2.
- Facilitate CWR on-site discussions to ensure a full dialogue and that the required information is captured from participants.

Task 2.3 - Post CWR On-Site Meeting Support - The contractor shall post - on-site meetings administrative and support services:

- Summarize significant information from sources of information provided by participants at the on-site focal CWR meeting.
- Compile and distill notes from each CWR HUC on-site discussions into accurate summary

- Send notes from each CWR HUC on-site discussions to the EPA WAM for review. Update notes based on EPA WAM's feedback and send out revised version to participants for their review and comment.
- After discussions with the EPA WAM, address participant comments received on meeting notes which may require follow-up with them to receive clarifications or further documentation.
- Combine revised notes from with information collected from 1: (brief summary of relevant wetland regulations and policies), 2 (available literature regarding wetland loss, stressors, tools and strategies, and key information gaps), 3 (stakeholder/participant supplied reports) and 4 (new data and reports provided by participants from on-site meetings) for each CWR focal HUC.
- Develop an Executive Summary of **each** CWR focal HUC with information from task 2.3. and distribute to participants.
- Produce a Regional Report encompassing **all** CWR focal HUCs within each Region including graphics and visuals, send to the EPA WAM for review.
- Incorporate EPA WAM comments on Regional Report.
- Distribute revised Regional Report to participants (EPA WAM will send to Inter-Agency Workgroup) for review and comment.
- After discussions with the EPA WAM, address participant and Inter-Agency Workgroup comments and incorporate any new data supplied in a Final Regional Report.
- Develop an Executive Summary of **Final** Regional Report to be shared with Inter-Agency Workgroup and participants.
- Distribute **Final** Regional Report to participants and provide to the EPA WAM for posting on EPA website.

Summary of Deliverables

TASK	DELIVERABLES	DUE DATE TO EPA
Task 1.0	Work plan	Within 21 calendar days after receipt WA
Task 2.1	GIS maps Summary Findings (literature search and stakeholder provided information/reports) Participants List Power Point Slides	21 days prior to date of each CWR focal HUC

Task 2.2	Discussion Notes/ Stakeholder Responses	At completion of on-site focal HUC CWR
Task 2.3	Summary Notes (draft and final) with new Findings CWR HUC Report Regional Report Executive Summary of HUC and Regional Reports	Draft: 20 days after each CWR of focal HUC Final: 60 days after each CWR of focal HUC

Assumptions

The report summarizers and note-takers (Task 2) have a general understanding of tools to address wetland loss such as zoning ordinances, wetland regulations, and mitigation policies (and if possible, permits).

The CWRs facilitator and note taker (Task 2) have previous facilitation experience and/or knowledge/expertise in the wetland topics mentioned directly above.

General Requirement

- A. **Due Dates**: The contractor shall notify the EPA WAM in advance if a due date will not be met and request a revised date.
- b. **Draft Documents**: The contractor is required to submit draft documents for EPA WAM's review. Draft documents shall be prepared in an electronic format (MS Word, tif/gif, pdf, PowerPoint). The EPA WAM will provide comments on draft submissions prior to submission of final documents.
- c. **Final Documents**: The contractor shall submit final documents both electronically (MS Word, tif/gif, pdf, PowerPoint) and in hardcopy as specified by the EPA WAM. If requested via written technical direction by the EPA WAM, outreach materials may be required for distribution at workshops, meetings, or conferences (100 copies or less). See the contract EPAAR clause 1552.208-70 for additional information on printing.